

Menor's Ferry  
Moose  
Grand Teton National Park  
Wyoming

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
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PHOTOGRAPH-DATA BOOK REPORT  
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MENOR'S FERRY

Grand Teton National Park, Moose, Wyoming

ADDRESS: West bank of the Snake River, Moose, Wyo.  
OWNER: National Park Service  
OCCUPANT: none  
USE: Historic Point of Interest

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

William D. (Bill) Menor came to the Jackson Hole valley in 1892 and established squatters rights to 148 acres of land on the west bank of the Snake River. Here he built a log cabin and a ferry; later a store was started. Menor's Ferry was evidently the heart of the economy of the valley. The dangerous Snake River divides the valley into two parts. The east portion contains most of the arable land, while the bulk of the forest was in the west portion.

The ferry and store served the inhabitants of the valley for over thirty years. In 1918 Menor sold his homestead and ferry to Miss Maud Noble. She continued operation of the ferry until 1926 when a steel bridge was built nearby. Miss Noble sold the property and operation to the Snake River Land Company in 1929.

In June, 1949, the Jackson Hole Preserve, Inc. began the restoration of the ferry, the cabin-store and other remaining buildings. In 1950 the property became part of Grand Teton National Park.

The cabin that served as living quarters and store, the smoke house, and the restored ferry -- which transports visitors partway across the Snake River and back -- serve as a reminder of an important transportation link in the Jackson Hole area.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Bill Menor was reportedly a buffalo hunter for the Union Pacific Railroad prior to his entry into the Jackson Hole country in 1892.

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He established a homestead on the west bank of the Snake River. The selection of the land was doubtless guided by his desire to operate a ferry across the river. The forest was also on the west side of the river, and much of Menor's business was the ferrying of logs across the river. On August 13, 1908, he received patent to the 148.53 acres he had settled on earlier. He seems to have been the first homesteader on the west side of the Snake River.

The log cabin Menor built among the cottonwood trees has three rooms which, judging from the construction, were built at different times. The west room dates from 1892; the east room which became the store was built next, then the center room was built connecting the two, and served as kitchen and storage area for the cabin-store combination. The exterior of the buildings was white-washed (as they appear today).

The ferry that Bill Menor built was a flatbottomed boat resting on pontoons. It was carried by the current and guided by ropes attached to an overhead cable which was secured to a windlass so that the cable could be adjusted to the rise and fall of the current.

The boat was large enough to accommodate four horses and a wagon. The horses were unhitched and placed beside the wagon. Bill charged 50¢ for a team and 25¢ for a man on horseback; foot passengers rode free if a vehicle was being ferried across. When Maud Noble bought the ferry operation in 1918, she promptly raised the prices.

The ferry was beached in the winter months and the river had to be forded. Later a winter bridge, removed in the spring, was constructed.

Menor's Ferry was the site of a celebration on August 15, 1898, in honor of William O. Owen, Bishop Franklin, S. Spalding, Frank C. Petersen and John Shive who made the first ascent of the Grand Teton Peak on August 11, 1898. It was here at the ferry that the party had left their wagon and started out on foot up the Grand Teton.

In 1905 Bill Menor's brother, Holiday, arrived. For a time they lived together, then a disagreement arose and Holiday moved out, establishing a homestead of his own on the east side of the Snake River. They did not speak for two years, and according to legend would curse and shake fists at each other across the river.

The surviving homestead structures reconstructed in 1949 by the Jackson Hole Preserve, Inc. include the cabin-store, a warehouse building of logs with a root cellar, a log smokehouse and a privy. The blacksmith shop and barn are missing.

Sometime after sale of the Bill Menor homestead, he and Holiday moved to California. Bill Menor died in San Diego on May 30, 1933, and Holiday Menor died there on December 18, 1934.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL AND SOURCES

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- Kendrew, A. E., "Report on Owned Structures of a Historic Character, Jackson Hole, Wyoming", 1942.
- Mumey, Nolie, The Teton Mountains, Their History and Tradition, Art-craft Press, Denver, 1947.
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#### ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

##### EXTERIOR

Overall Dimensions - A one story, three room cabin -- the rooms built at different times. The east room (the store) has a porch on the south-southwest; 41'-4½" x 23'-11".

Foundation - Stone.

Wall Construction - Log construction, notched cornering, except for the center room (which was probably the last addition) which is of vertical board and batten on the south and vertical capped rough sawn planks on the north.

Openings - Entrances: Two exterior doors, 2'-7" x 6'-4½" of vertical rough cut planks of 1 x 6's and 1 x 8's. Each

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door has a light of 6 panes. Casings are rough cut 2 x 8's.

Windows: Wood double-hung, vary from 1/4, 4/4 to 6/6.

Roof - Gable roof, planking covered with tar paper and a second layer of planks. Roof over the west and central rooms has a pitch of approximately  $16\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  and that over the east room has a pitch of  $18^{\circ}$ .

Chimney - none.

#### INTERIOR

Floor Plan - The original (1892) cabin was the east room of 16'-4" x 16'-11 $\frac{1}{2}$ "; the west room - later the store - is 14'-1" x 20'-1" set back from the front or south-south-west facade and projecting 6'-2" to the rear of the other two rooms; the center or connecting room is 11'-7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 17'-0".

Flooring - Rough cut planking.

Wall and Ceiling Finish - Logs and planking exposed.

Trim - None except rough sawn window and door jambs, etc.

Hardware - Hand forged hinges on door to the store.

#### GENERAL SETTING

The homestead cabin and outbuildings are situated on the west bank of the Snake River.

#### OUTBUILDINGS

There is a log storage building with a root cellar beneath which has walls of native field stone; exterior dimensions 13'-4" x 18'-10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Also there is a log smoke house 9'-4" x 9'-4" which has boxed corner construction, and there is a privy.

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